



REPORT SUMMARY

SUBJECT: Draft EPA Equitable Development Report

FROM: Sasha Vrtunski, AICP

DATE: January 20, 2016

SUMMARY STATEMENT:

The EPA Equitable Development Report is an analysis of community input gathered during a two-day workshop held in Asheville in 2015. The purpose of the workshop was to educate participants on equitable development as a tool to address sustainable, affordable and livable communities. The purpose of the report is to provide best practices for city staff and community agencies to consider in projects as our community continues to grow. The report gives an opportunity to explore the perspective of subject matter experts from outside of the Asheville community.

These ideas were suggested by workshop participants and have not been analyzed by City staff to determine their feasibility or legality in North Carolina.

INTENT:

City staff intends to analyze the report's suggested strategies for applicability in Asheville and integrate the report's strategies and approaches, to the extent possible, in city projects, planning and engagement efforts. Staff will share the document with workshop participants and the broader community to maximize the potential for strategy integration in not only city government projects but all sectors of the community.

COST OF REPORT:

No cost

FUNDING SOURCE:

EPA supplied the workshop and report through their Building Blocks grant.



Supporting Equitable Development

BUILDING BLOCKS FOR SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

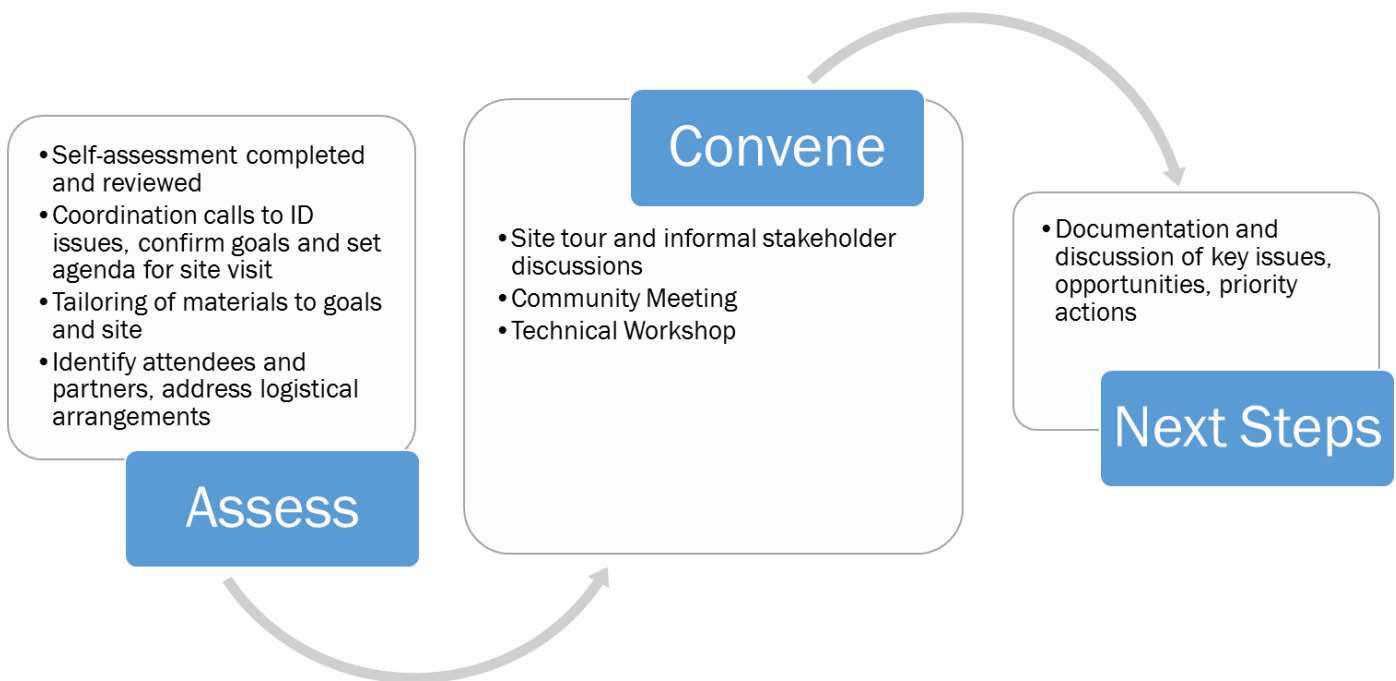
Asheville, NC
Next Steps Memorandum

January 15, 2016

INTRODUCTION

The core mission of U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is to protect human health and the environment. EPA's Office of Sustainable Communities (OSC)—or the Smart Growth Office— helps to support this mission by working with communities to reach development goals that create positive impacts on air, water, public health, economic vitality and quality of life for residents. OSC created the Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities program to provide quick, targeted technical assistance on specific smart growth development topics by bringing subject matter experts to communities. Communities request this technical assistance through a competitive application process.

The Building Blocks technical assistance is designed to move a community through a process of assessment, convening, and action planning—helping learn about a given topic and create plan to move forward on implementation. The program helps a community identify potential challenges, as well as realize opportunities that already exist to make progress. It includes a series of pre-and post-workshop conference calls, a self-assessment, and an on-site convening of stakeholders to discuss issues, next steps, and actions related to advancing the communities' specific goals. These efforts help a given community gain a deeper understanding of a particular smart growth issue and identify specific steps necessary to move them closer to implementation. The diagram below outlines the typical flow of the Building Blocks technical assistance program.



THREE STAGES OF TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (CREDIT: RENAISSANCE PLANNING)

This memo documents the key outcomes of the EPA Equitable Development technical assistance delivered to Asheville, North Carolina, focusing on neighborhoods and commercial areas East of the Riverway. Equitable Development encompasses a broad range of approaches for creating communities and regions where residents of all incomes, ages, races, and ethnicities participate in

and benefit from decisions that shape the places where they live. This memo identifies key community issues, priority goals, and specific actions articulated by workshop participants that may help this area of the city continue to grow and develop in a way that benefits both existing and future residents.

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Asheville is located in the Blue Ridge Mountains of western North Carolina. With a population of 85,000, it is the 11th largest city in the state. It is also home to the 8,000 acre Biltmore Estate, a key destination for tourists from around the world which generates approximately \$140 million annually in local spending¹. Almost ten years ago a New York Times article coined Asheville the “Appalachian Shangri-La” and described it as a “year-round resort town, tucked between the Blue Ridge and Smoky Mountains, which draws a funky mix of New Agers, fleece-clad mountain bikers, antiques lovers and old-time farmers.”² More recently the town emerged as a foodie mecca and begun to rival other cities like Portland, Oregon in terms of the number of breweries per capita³. This notoriety continues to fuel growth in the city creating an influx of new people and businesses focused on the eclectic arts and local food culture.



BUSINESSES IN THE RIVER ARTS DISTRICT (CREDIT: RENAISSANCE PLANNING)

The East of the Riverway area, which connects downtown to the French Broad River, has approximately 3,500 residents and is made up of a series of central neighborhoods in the city. The area is undergoing significant infill and redevelopment with new homes and business locating in the area. This is causing a rapid shift in area demographics as well as the look and feel of the neighborhood. In addition to its proximity to downtown Asheville and the river, the neighborhoods are home to, or in short walking distance from, several large employers including Mission Hospital, AB Technical Community College (AB Tech), and the newly operating New Belgium brewery. This area is also home to the River Arts District: an older industrial area that has transitioned into a home to many working artists and studios, restaurants, and entertainment businesses.

¹ Shuman, Michael E. The Biltmore Companies 2012 Economic Study: Measuring Local Impacts. Burns and Hammond, August, 2013. http://michaelhshuman.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/BH-Biltmore-Presentation_Economic-Analysis.pdf

² Dixon, Chris. 36 Hours in Asheville, NC. New York Times 2007. <http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/30/travel/30hours.html>

³ Dewlain, Shala. 36 Hours in Asheville, NC. New York Times. October 21, 2010 http://www.nytimes.com/2010/10/24/travel/24hours.html?_r=0



EAST OF THE RIVERWAY NEIGHBORHOOD (CREDIT: CITY OF ASHEVILLE)

Recognizing the rapid change occurring in this part of the community, the city of Asheville began a series of planning efforts entitled "The East of the Riverway Initiative" in 2011. These efforts were funded in part by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) II program. Some of the relevant projects initiated under this program include several multimodal transportation planning efforts, community engagement in decision-making processes and increased capacity for job training and education as well as the East of the Riverway Alternatives to Gentrification Study. This initiative generated plans for more than \$ 54 million in infrastructure investments that were needed to improve walking, biking and transit opportunities in the neighborhood.

While many in the city see the changes in the East of the Riverway area as positive, many existing residents and business owners are concerned with the potential negative consequences of this development. The influx of restaurants, breweries and other businesses in the River Arts District is driving up the cost of living in the surrounding neighborhoods and also attracting new residents, patrons and visitors who are very different (racially, culturally and socio-economically) from the residents and business owners who have been in this area for generations. In particular, there are concerns among members of the black community, working artists and other existing residents and business owners, who feel that they are being "priced out" of the area due to rapidly increasing property taxes and rental housing costs.

The residential neighborhoods in the East of the Riverway area also continue to struggle with the legacy of late 1960's and early 1970's Urban Renewal program. "In the mid-1960s, the neighborhood was primarily African American, housing about half of the entire African American population in Asheville. Fifty-eight percent of residents owned their homes, which was only slightly below the national average at the time. There were a number of businesses located along Eagle, Valley, and Market streets and small shops interspersed throughout the community. The white population (in the neighborhood) was in the minority, but most of the white families had lived in the neighborhood for a long time. Widespread racial integration had yet to take hold."⁴ In the late 1960's the area had "5,000 residents and 1,300 structures, 85 percent of which were considered substandard. Because most of the buildings on this 420-acre district were in disrepair, the (urban renewal) plan called for the demolition of 60 percent of the buildings and the rehabilitation of 40 percent."⁵ While historical accounts indicate that most members of the community were initially in favor of revitalization promised by the Urban Renewal program, the resulting demolition and creation of new homes and public housing was perceived by many as "negro removal—a top-down program that ignored the needs of the neighborhood, displaced and dismantled the community, and made the area more attractive for outsiders."⁶ This history along with the current concentration of persistent poverty and unemployment for African American residents in the neighborhood has contributed to mistrust within the community about city efforts to improve or revitalize the area.

⁴ Tighe, Rosie and Opelt, Timothy. Collective Memory and Planning: The Continuing Legacy of Urban Renewal in Asheville, NC. Journal of Planning History 1-22, 2014.

⁵ Tighe, Rosie and Opelt, Timothy. Collective Memory and Planning: The Continuing Legacy of Urban Renewal in Asheville, NC. Journal of Planning History 1-22, 2014.

⁶ Tighe, Rosie and Opelt, Timothy. Collective Memory and Planning: The Continuing Legacy of Urban Renewal in Asheville, NC. Journal of Planning History 1-22, 2014.

Given these dynamics, the Equitable Development technical assistance initially focused on four primary goals for the East of the Riverway neighborhoods:

- **Preserve and create affordable housing** – Increasing property values, land costs, and limited undeveloped land in East of the Riverway make it difficult to provide new affordable housing options. Many homeowners and renters (37-48 percent) are already cost-burdened (households paying more than 30% of their income for housing). As property values rise, both owners and renters may be at greater risk of displacement.
- **Prevent displacement** – Both the African-American and working artist community are experiencing changes. The African-American community has declined from 76% in 1990 to 56% in 2010 in East of the Riverway neighborhoods. Meanwhile, members of the arts community worry that fewer affordable commercial spaces will lead to a need to move elsewhere.
- **Strengthen access to jobs and neighborhood amenities** – Although centrally located, many key employers in the East of the Riverway area have a relatively low number of local employees. Access to other amenities (such as childcare) is also limited.
- **Support the arts community** – In a recent city survey, many artists fear their ability to keep their workspace in the neighborhood or for other artists to grow, as rental prices in the neighborhood increase. The arts community is a major draw for tourists and a significant driver of economic development citywide.

The Building Blocks technical assistance looked to build upon previous efforts and advance the conversation about how best to achieve the above goals and help both the city and local residents consider additional strategies to help shape new development so that it benefits all residents.

COMMUNITY CONVENING

EPA contractor Renaissance Planning, with support from EPA staff, led an on-site workshop on July 16-17, 2015. Staff from the city of Asheville served as key local partners and coordinated the workshop events.

Site Tour

The city staff led a site tour that helped to familiarize the project team with the local area. The tour went through many parts of the East of the Riverway area including:

- The River Arts District, including both the newer restaurants, galleries and businesses as well as existing studios and businesses.
- Vacant industrial warehouses along the river edge that previously were artist space
- New Belgium Brewery complex, under construction



NEWER DEVELOPMENTS PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES BETWEEN JOBS AND EXISTING RESIDENTS (CREDIT: RENAISSANCE PLANNING)

- Historically black neighborhoods in East of the Riverway, including Southside, South French Broad, Hillcrest, Lee Walker Heights, WECAN.
- Existing public housing developments including Erskine-Livingston, Walton Street Apartments.
- Key anchor institutions such as the Mission Hospital and AB Technical Community College.

City staff also identified where new development had recently occurred or was forthcoming. These included the riverfront green space amenities, community centers, and streetscape improvements.

Community Meeting

On July 16, the city and project team held a community meeting. Mayor Esther Manheimer was present to open the meeting and reiterate the City's commitment to equitable development in the East of the Riverway area. The meeting included presentations on examples of equitable development from around the country, and engaged residents in a discussion to better define what equitable development meant to them relative to their hopes and concerns for future development in the neighborhood. More than 50 members of the community attended the meeting.



STAKEHOLDERS BRAINSTORM ACTIONS THAT THE COMMUNITY CAN TAKE TO SUPPORT EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT (CREDIT: RENAISSANCE PLANNING)

Technical Workshop

Day 2 included two work sessions, providing a more targeted discussion on goals, strengths, challenges, and opportunities relating to equitable development, and helped the community refine its goals and identify some new ideas and strategies that could be moved forward. About 45 people participated in Day 2 workshop activities, including elected officials; local government staff; representatives of civic and nonprofit institutions; local employers; community organizers; public housing representatives; local residents; local artists and representatives of educational institutions.

KEY COMMUNITY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

One key element of the first day evening public workshop included a facilitated discussion with community members to better define equitable development for the East of the Riverway neighborhoods. Members of the community expanded on the general definition with the following comments that help frame issues and opportunities from the local perspective:

- A community for all ages
- Greater control/"say" over futures
- Improved education
- Individual autonomy and power
- Clean and healthy environment
- Sustainable development
- Housing supply and affordability
- Community benefits
- Food access and grocery stores
- Sustainable economics
- Transportation
- Mental health services access
- Communications
- Open-mindedness
- Accountability and transparency in decision making
- More mixed income development
- Defying gentrification

- A sense of security, peace, and representation
- Dismantle white supremacy
- Employment and living wages
- More African-American representation in the Arts District
- Affordable live/work spaces for artists
- Diversity of opportunity and employment
- A greater percentage of minority-owned businesses
- Building wealth
- Fair access to health care
- Creation of a land trust

Challenges

Some of the challenges in the East of the Riverway neighborhood highlighted during the workshops by city staff and community members include:

- **The legacy of urban renewal:** African Americans living in the East of the Riverway (EOTR) neighborhoods have not benefited proportionately from the new investment and redevelopment in Asheville, as evidenced by the high percentage of cost-burdened households and the fact that “median household income (for EOTR) in 2010, was 132% below the City of Asheville and 143% below Buncombe County.”⁷ Given the early promises of urban renewal more than 40 years ago and the fact that there remain consistent levels of poverty in this area while the rest of the city is experiencing an economic boom, many in the African-American community remain frustrated and distrustful of city initiated efforts to improve conditions in the neighborhood. Furthermore, the look and feel of the vibrant new retail and housing in the River Arts District does not include any physical features that connect it with the rich black history of the adjacent neighborhoods.
- **Housing affordability:** The city and its community partners are outperforming other similar communities in the state of North Carolina in terms of addressing housing needs through new affordable housing production, using state and federal dollars efficiently, strengthening the housing trust fund, providing rebates to encourage private sector production, and supporting an active community development corporation producing housing.⁸ However, many residents in the community remain housing cost-burdened or are at risk of displacement due to rising tax rates or rents. The low supply of affordable housing options is further exacerbated by a general lack of land available for new development and high demand for market rate housing and rehabilitation of older structures.



EXISTING PUBLIC HOUSING IS ISOLATED; A LEGACY OF URBAN RENEWAL (CREDIT: RENAISSANCE PLANNING)

⁷ Vrtunski, Tveidt, Brown, and Crown. Alternatives to Gentrification Report. June, 2014.

⁸ Nguyen, Dr. Mai Thi. Affordable Housing Scorecard City of Asheville, NC. January, 2014.

- **Clusters of persistent poverty and low-wage jobs:** In several neighborhoods East of the Riverway, many residents remain unemployed or underemployed. This is particularly acute for African American households. Workshop participants cited a desire for more targeted programs such as a city-wide anti-poverty strategy and more neighborhood based initiatives to help people of color get access to living wage jobs. Access to living wage jobs is also a challenge citywide given the dominance of tourism and other service-based businesses relative to the cost of living. Additionally, some residents feel that educational disparities and violence in the neighborhood could be better addressed and prevented with more targeted efforts by the city.
- **Public housing issues:** Residents and city staff identified many challenges with existing public housing in Asheville, including the long waiting list for units; limited pool of landlords who accept Section 8 vouchers and general absence of housing options; stigma surrounding affordable housing; and inadequacy of vouchers to help pay for housing. The HUD voucher payment standard is not sufficient to meet the existing rental costs in Asheville.
- **Availability of affordable commercial spaces:** Many artists work in the River Arts District which once was home to a larger number of vacant industrial spaces, older warehouses and live/work spaces where people could create and sell art. While there remain some live/work options for artists, these spaces are quickly disappearing, threatening displacement of the very artists that attract locals and visitors to the area.



INDUSTRIAL CREATIVE SPACES HAVE BEEN DISAPPEARING (CREDIT: RENAISSANCE PLANNING)

Opportunities

Despite the challenges noted above, previous planning efforts and workshop discussions highlighted several opportunities for the community to capitalize on its rich cultural heritage and current economic success in ways that can benefit existing residents. These include ways to:

- **Better link the history and culture of the African American community into new development and foster African American arts and business growth.** Asheville's strong African American culture can be a huge asset to help build a more inclusive and cohesive community, and to preserve an important part of Asheville's history. Workshop participants suggested leveraging the Black Highlanders Collection and activities at UNC Asheville; offering Gray Line Trolley tours to tourists that emphasize telling the story of East of the River neighborhoods; creating historical wayfinding markers; and the engaging the Arts Council. It was also suggested that more visible representations and stories about the neighborhood's African American past would help create opportunities for stronger social connections between existing and new residents. Additional ideas focused on strategies to promote local African American artists and businesses including highlighting the Afrilachian craft market and black theater program (perhaps through co-ops); providing a commercial district incubator for black community resources; and creating a future black leaders process and/or program.
- **Build greater trust and enable better collaboration between neighborhood residents and city staff.** Given the collective memory and negative perceptions of the city's urban renewal program, some members of the African American community remain distrustful of partnering with the city or other stakeholders to improve the neighborhood. To begin addressing these issues, workshop attendees recommended the use of the Racial Equity Institute⁹ trainings or similar efforts to help establish a more common understanding of racism and opportunities to ensure more equitable development approaches in the future.
- **Improve awareness and utilization of existing affordable housing and community development opportunities.** The city of Asheville has several existing programs aimed at addressing affordable housing needs, particularly for residents at extremely low income levels. Additionally, there are some city-sponsored minority business incubation programs and local artist sponsored youth arts programs offered in the neighborhood. Asheville is also home to a large number of non-profits focused on a wide range of social and community betterment issues. Initiating activities to build trust between residents and city staff while simultaneously enhancing communications about these programs can reduce misconceptions, increase awareness and better connect neighborhood residents with public, private and non-profit resources aimed at saving money or better connecting people with jobs.



**LOCAL ART INCORPORATED INTO EXISTING DEVELOPMENT IN THE RIVER ARTS DISTRICT
(CREDIT: RENAISSANCE PLANNING)**

⁹ The Racial Equity Institute is a non-profit organization dedicated to helping create racially equitable organizations and systems. <http://rei.racialequityinstitute.org/wpsite/about/>

- **Expand citywide programs, practices and policies to support equitable development:** The city of Asheville is on the cusp of updating its comprehensive plan which will set goals and policies related to community development including specifics on issues such as housing, economic development, transportation, land use, etc. The city has an opportunity to organize outreach and community engagement at the neighborhood level to ensure residents and business owners have their voices heard in the planning process. From a policy perspective, workshop participants identified several ideas for advancing equitable development goals in the comprehensive plan and through other potential city actions including: enforcement of anti-discrimination requirements for landlords; community benefit agreements that promote local hires; improved transit service in the neighborhood; and “Ban the Box” initiatives, which can help previously incarcerated people become employed by removing the check box that indicates a criminal record from job applications.¹⁰
- **More engaged and coordinated non-profits, local organizations and civic associations:** There are many local community groups who are active and have active constituencies within the East of the Riverway area. Increased coordination among non-profit and civic associations could help to better leverage existing resources. Increased city support such as funding for a neighborhood liaison or ambassador tasked with coordination tasks could also help capitalize on community and capacity-building work already underway. Additionally, the community may find benefit from consolidating efforts among different non-profits. Such organizations stand to benefit from networking and connecting with others; accessing new sources of funding; and accessing to new job and economic opportunities. Some attendees also cited issues specifically with capacity building within the black community (e.g. through increased economic development and local business support). One example of a best practice within the community was the shared decision-making program created by the Housing Authority Resident’s Council. This could serve as a model for other types of community empowerment, engagement, and leadership capacity building.
- **Leverage resources of neighborhood employers to increase access to jobs and training targeted to existing neighborhood residents:** The neighborhood is home to several large institutions including AB Tech and Mission Hospital. There is an opportunity for the city to partner with these institutions to explore opportunities for providing direct economic and educational impacts to neighborhood residents. This could include institution sponsored soft skill development; improved transit/transportation access; mentorship programs; providing childcare; or targeted purchasing from neighborhood businesses.

¹⁰ These ideas were suggested by workshop participants and have not been analyzed by City Staff to determine their feasibility or legality in NC.

NEXT STEPS

In the course of the technical workshops, the project team provided examples of some best practices from around the country to help address the different community issues and challenges noted above and help prompt discussions about potential next steps to overcome those challenges. Through this process, workshop participants identified the following refined set of goals as key priorities for the purpose of identifying some near term action steps:

- **Improve community engagement and enhance communication** between the city and neighborhood residents; between different non-profits and neighborhood institutions; and between new and existing community members to help rebuild trust and engender more collaboration on addressing community challenges.
- **Preserve existing and provide more affordable housing choices** within the East of the Riverway neighborhoods.
- Strengthen the existing neighborhood by **promoting local investment and community building** commitments by existing and new community institutions.
- **Preserve community identity** by promoting the arts community and celebrating local African American history.

Workshop participants used these priority goals and the examples of best practices as a starting point for identifying potential actions and strategies for promoting equitable development in the neighborhoods and commercial areas East of the Riverway. While several of these goals and actions are specific to the EOTR neighborhoods, many could also translate citywide. The tables on the following pages detail the outcomes of the workshop process. In some cases participants identified a clear lead for each action, and for some there is a need to find a willing leader to move the ideas forward. Provided at the bottom of each table are links to relevant examples and resources related to the goal and key actions.

These next steps reflect the beginning of a potential framework for action by the city, community members and other interested stakeholders based on the two-day workshop. Additional study, planning and community engagement will likely be needed for implementation.

Improve community engagement and enhance communications.

The workshop process revealed some challenges and opportunities related to improving trust and communication between neighborhood residents and city staff; among different institutions and non-profits working on neighborhood betterment issues; and between existing residents, artists, business owners and newcomers. Moving forward with the actions below can help strengthen the collaborative opportunities and build the trust needed to address key community challenges and better connect existing residents with programs and resources to improve their lives.

<i>Supporting Implementation Steps</i>	<i>Why is this important?</i>	<i>How will we measure success?</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Lead Role</i>	<i>Support</i>	<i>Cost & Implementation Resources</i>
Establish new non-profit collaborative and neighborhood strategy	Access to information and awareness of different resources can help different organizations to target efforts and develop complementary strategies. Fosters transparency, trust, and community buy-in	Lead neighborhood non-profit identified to initiate creation of collaborative; collaborative leader identified; collaborative structure/forum established; new collaborations occur; better community outcomes and awareness	Immediate and ongoing and recurring	Lead neighborhood organization (e.g. WECAN, SSAB, SFBNA, Residents Councils)	Neighborhood associations, the Neighborhood Advisory Committee community stakeholders, the City of Asheville, and partners TBD	People time (paid or volunteer) Some limited cost to hold meetings; may need sponsors for member transportation, childcare, food, etc.; may also need sponsors to help fund a staff position for collaborative if volunteer hours not sufficient
Identify key metrics for success	The establishment of metrics can help to monitor progress and regularly prioritize actions of the collaborative	Metrics established; regularly evaluated and communicated to stakeholders	Immediate	Lead of new collaborative neighborhood organization	Other members of the collaborative, City of Asheville	People time Some limited cost to monitor progress and prepare communications
Create database or other communication strategies to let people know who, when and where	Provides inventory of local neighborhood non-profit capacity; provides direct	Database established and greater interest/attendance at	Short-term	Lead of new collaborative neighborhood organization	Other members of the collaborative, City of Asheville	People time Some limited cost for host website or other

	information to people seeking services	community meetings				means for regular communication
Identify new techniques to foster better two-way conversations between different community groups and city staff	Stronger lines of two-way communication will help to build trust, increase awareness and influence of neighborhood on future development. City and neighborhood stakeholders can expand the use of smaller neighborhood forums, email, internet, word of mouth (through designated community ambassadors), flyers, direct, radio churches, etc.	Improved awareness and participation by neighborhood residents	Short-term	Lead of new collaborative neighborhood organization and City staff	Other members of the collaborative, outside facilitators or trainers sponsored by City of Asheville	People time Some limited cost associated with new methods of communication or additional City staff resources

Relevant Examples:

Colorado Collaborative – for over two years, several Denver based non-profits met regularly to discuss shared space needs the potential for collaboration. Out of those meetings came the Colorado Collaborative which serves as a hub to promote non-profit capacity building and networking between non-profits and other business, community and government representatives.

www.coloradocollaborative.org

Community Ambassadors Program, City of San Francisco – the City of San Francisco established a Community Ambassador program to better connect with disenfranchised community members in addressing neighborhood safety issues. The establishment of ambassador programs is a proven technique that can help build trust and strengthen community knowledge and access to city services.

<http://sfgov.org/oceia/community-ambassadors-program>

Preserve existing and provide more affordable housing choices.

The city of Asheville has invested a lot of time, effort and resources to address the shortage of affordable housing citywide. The Asheville Housing Authority has partnered with existing public housing residents to create a shared decision-making program through the Housing Authority Resident's Council and recently completed the conversion of most of its public housing units to the Housing Choice Voucher program as project-based voucher units under the Rental Assistance Demonstration Program. However additional efforts are needed to preserve existing affordable units and provide new units located in the neighborhoods East of the Riverway in order to prevent displacement and reduce the housing cost burden.

<i>Supporting Implementation Steps</i>	<i>Why is this important?</i>	<i>How will we measure success?</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Lead Role</i>	<i>Support</i>	<i>Cost & Implementation Resources</i>
Establish new partnerships between existing housing advocates and anchor institutions to concurrently address workforce development and housing affordability in the EOTR area	Existing anchor institutions can be another resource for the Housing Trust Fund and/or employer based housing assistance; but also serve as a resource for strengthening the income generating opportunities for local residents.	Existing anchor institutions incorporate neighborhood development goals into their programs; new options in workforce training and housing emerge	Short-term	Housing Authority, City, Mountain Housing Opportunities (MHO), AB Tech	Residents Councils, County, Green Opportunities, Ingles Markets, Mission Hospital	People time Some increased costs for institutional programmatic support
Develop more mixed use projects that include both affordable residential and commercial space	Limited land supply increases demand for denser development which can improve financial returns on investment for local development projects and help create more walkable neighborhoods. These	Increased jobs in neighborhood; more grocery and other services in Southside; increased opportunity for affordable home ownership and rentals	Long-term	City, Mountain Housing Opportunities (MHO), and other willing local developers	Local economic development partners	Additional financial resources may be needed from city to support specific developer incentives

	returns can be used to help fund additional affordable units while also improving access by residents to new job opportunities with new commercial development.					
Expand existing affordable housing efforts in the East of the Riverway neighborhoods including the creation of an EOTR land trust and other mechanisms to increase funding for the City's affordable housing trust fund.	Existing initiatives are not keeping up with demand. Keeping the EOTR neighborhoods affordable will enable existing residents to stay and thrive; support local artists and the arts related economic development activities	New incentives for the private sector to produce affordable housing; 50 units of affordable housing provided or 20% of all units developed in neighborhood as affordable	18-24 months	Community based organizations, other housing stakeholders	EOTR neighborhoods and River Arts District property owners, arts and business associations, Riverlink, Greenworks	People time Additional funding to support increased resources for Housing Trust Fund

Relevant Examples:

Durham Community Land Trustees, Inc. (DCLT) – Established in 1987 by concerned neighborhood residents, the Durham Community Land Trustees build, operate and advocate for affordable housing. DCLT focuses in Durham's West End, Burch Avenue and Lyon Park neighborhoods. Since its establishment, they have created and/or preserved 200 units for affordable housing and currently have 47 units in development. <http://dclt.org/aboutDCLT.cfm>

Employer Assisted Housing, Greater Minnesota Housing Fund – The Greater Minnesota Housing Fund developed an Employer Assisted Housing Guide as a resource for community leaders and local employers to communicate the key ways in which local employers can play a role in addressing affordable housing needs. This includes engaging area employers in increasing supply and helping employees obtain housing. http://www.gmhf.com/downloads/publications-research-reports/eah/GMHF_EAH.pdf

Strengthen the existing neighborhood through promotion of local investment and community- building commitments by existing and new community institutions and businesses.

While the neighborhood is seeing new investments from the city in terms of infrastructure improvements and planning initiatives aimed at addressing some of the neighborhood challenges, there remain missed opportunities to ensure that local residents can benefit directly from these opportunities and the ongoing new business growth. Additionally, given the strong arts and food focus of the new development, there may also be untapped opportunities to target minority business incubation specific to arts and food-service sectors and further leverage the buying power, training and other direct job connections between neighborhood residents and anchor institutions such as Mission Hospital, AB Tech, New Belgium Brewery and other River Arts District businesses.

<i>Supporting Implementation Steps</i>	<i>Why is this important?</i>	<i>How will we measure success?</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Lead Role</i>	<i>Support</i>	<i>Cost & Implementation Resources</i>
Engage anchor institutions in voluntary buy, train and hire programs, and local agreements	To start breaking down barriers between low income residents seeking new or improved employment and nearby training and employment opportunities.	Partner institutions identified; new buy, train and hiring programs developed; Number of new jobs created and held by neighborhood residents of color	2-5 years	Green Opportunities, City	Buncombe County, Chamber of Commerce, Mission Hospital, AB Tech, New Belgium Brewery, Downtown businesses	People time Additional programmatic funds from anchor institutions
Evaluate existing minority business incubation programs and identify refinements to target business growth in service-based sectors.	The River Arts District draws patrons seeking authentic, local businesses. This presents opportunities for new initiatives that reflect and celebrate African American culture.	New African American owned businesses established in the River Arts District	2-5 years	A-B Tech, Green Opportunities	Chamber of Commerce, Small Business Administration, New Belgium Brewery, City of Asheville, Downtown businesses	People time

Re-examine existing job training programs through a SWOT analysis to identify refinements that better target neighborhood residents in soft skills training	Low income job training and job placement programs already exists but are having limited impacts in the neighborhood. A SWOT analysis can help identify needed refinements or other efforts to target success within the EOTR.	Increased percentage of employed neighborhood residents in new local businesses.	1-2 years	City and Chamber of Commerce	Mission Hospital, AB Tech, New Belgium Brewery, Downtown businesses	People time
Identify opportunities for incorporating equitable development goals into broader City policies and other initiatives	Codifies the city's commitment to providing benefits of development to all community members.	New goals and supporting policies established; Participatory decision making strengthened; Improved quality of life (rising income levels for people of color, legacy resident staying in place). Policy revisions adopted.	2-5 years	City	TBD	People time

Relevant Examples:

Evergreen Cooperatives, Cleveland, OH – In the late 2000's, several Cleveland based healthcare and educational institutions located in the Greater University Circle neighborhood established a working group with the city to address challenges of concentrated poverty in the neighborhood immediately surrounding these institutions. In 2008 the working group launched the Evergreen Cooperative Initiative to create living-wage jobs in for households with a median household income below \$18,500. Recognized nationally as the "Cleveland model," the initiative attempts to leverage the resources and buying power the different partner institutions to help seed small business creation for local residents. <http://www.evgoh.com/about-us/>

Preserve community identity by promoting the arts community and celebrating local African American history.

The East of the Riverway neighborhood is experiencing notable physical change with rehabilitation of existing buildings, new infrastructure improvements and new buildings emerging from vacant lands. All of this new growth presents an opportunity to celebrate the neighborhood's black history and culture through new physical structures and interpretive programs that reflect its unique story. Doing so can strengthen awareness of the area's shared history and provide a common understanding between existing and new residents and businesses. Additionally, new interpretive exhibits, museums or other programs can also be a draw for tourists which in turn can spark demand additional African American based businesses.

<i>Supporting Implementation Steps</i>	<i>Why is this important?</i>	<i>How will we measure success?</i>	<i>Timeframe</i>	<i>Lead Role</i>	<i>Support</i>	<i>Cost & Implementation Resources</i>
Engage city parks and recreation department to create more opportunities for community connections and historical storytelling.	Strengthen connections between public assets and neighborhood identity; provide improved outdoor meeting spaces, playgrounds, and safe spaces. Make the most of existing public spaces	New interpretive displays or programs established in City parks; increased numbers and enhancement of community events; increase community use of facilities	Short term: space use by community; longer term: more community and cultural events	City Parks and Recreation	Community associations, African-American Heritage Commission, Asheville Design Center, Asheville Area Arts Council, churches	People time Costs associated with new interpretive projects
Engage the African-American arts community in identifying opportunities for black arts based businesses, physical/public space initiatives	Interpret and express history, neighborhood identity, and connections. Help publicize the black arts community more effectively.	New art installations in neighborhood; Existing and new arts based African American businesses able to thrive and locate in neighborhood	Long term, as the dynamic changes	TBD	Buncombe Cultural Alliance, River Arts District, local African-American artists, Asheville area arts council	People time

Target infrastructure improvements and land use policies that make walking and biking (e.g. complete streets) safe and convenient to improve pedestrian activity in the public sphere.	Support place-making through infrastructure investments that help physically connect historical, business, and commercial resources; improve access to jobs and other opportunities in a safe way.	Community ideas integrated into a plan and funded; enhanced physical connections between the African-American community and River Arts District; place-making (e.g. with street toppers.)	Short term for planning	City Transportation Department	Neighborhood associations, African-American Heritage Commission	People time Cost associated with infrastructure improvements
Get African-American groups communicating with each other and other members of the neighborhood community	There is a need to engage black leadership and other stakeholders in the neighborhood to help identify strategic projects and initiatives	More established forums for African-American community that engender ownership and result in new projects	Short term and ongoing	TBD	Hood Talk, Date My City liaison, Stop the Violence, Residents Councils, Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance	People time
Create a plan to more directly connect the River Arts District to the African-American neighborhoods physically and economically in East of the Riverway	Enhance both communities and create mutual opportunities to grow	Collaborative mentoring between neighborhood - based institutions and businesses resulting in growth of African American businesses.	Medium to long term	RiverLink, River Arts District Business Association, Southside Neighborhood Association, City of Asheville	Mountain Housing Opportunities, Green Opportunities Grant, Residents Councils, Housing Authority, LEAF, A-B Tech, River Arts District Artists	People time

Relevant Examples:

Places in the Making – A 2013 publication by MIT's Susan Silberberg on successfully engaging community members and incorporating unique culture and arts into placemaking. <http://dusp.mit.edu/cdd/project/placemaking>

APPENDIX

The self-assessment completed by the community, and the workshop presentations are attached.

Additional Resources

U.S. EPA Building Blocks for Sustainable Communities: <http://www.epa.gov/dced/buildingblocks.htm>

Creating Equitable, Healthy, and Sustainable Communities – EPA's key resource document on equitable development. <http://www2.epa.gov/smartgrowth/creating-equitable-healthy-and-sustainable-communities-strategies-advancing-smart-growth>

Equitable Development Toolkit <http://www.policylink.org/equity-tools/equitable-development-toolkit/about-toolkit>

Educate and Empower: Tools for Building Community Wealth (2015). 11 different community economic development initiatives from across the United States that provide strategies on helping low-income communities and communities of color build capacity and wealth. <http://democracycollaborative.org/content/educate-and-empower-tools-building-community-wealth-0>

Preserving, Protecting and Expanding Affordable Housing: A Policy Toolkit for Public Health (2015) A useful compendium of best practices http://www.changelabsolutions.org/sites/default/files/Preserving_Affordable_Housing-POLICY-TOOLKIT_FINAL_20150401.pdf

Workshop Attendees

Name	Affiliation
Roderick Simmons	City of Asheville, Parks and Recreation
Ayanfee Free	CWF Academy
Mildred Nance-Carson	Grant Center Advisory Board
Lisa Leatherman	Duke Energy
Angela Pitman	Buncombe County DHHS
Shuvonda Harper	Residents Council
Susanne Hackett	New Belgium Brewing
Valeria Watson	Zamani Refuge African Culture
Brit L. Castaneda	Zamani Refuge African Culture
Brian McCarthy	Odyssey Center for Ceramic Arts
Priscilla Ndiaye	Southside Community Advisory Board
Sonya Greck	Mission Hospital
Helen Hyatt	South French Broad Neighborhood Association
Robin Merell	Pisgah Legal Services
Mariate Echevery	City of Asheville, Transportation Department
Laura Collins	Asheville Habitat for Humanity
Ray Mapp	United Community Development
Vicki Meath	Just Economics
Ami Worthen	
Scott Dedman	Mountain Housing Opportunities
Mark Lewis	Changing Together
Dee Williams	United Community Development
Dewayne Barton	Hood Hugger International
Kerri Glover	A-B Technical College
Alaysia Hackett	Mars Hill University, Interdenominational Ministerial Alliance
Calvin Allen	Ujamaa Freedom Market
George Jones	Green Opportunities
Bettie Council	AAA Express
Olufemi Lewis	Hillcrest Resident
Terry Bellamy	Housing Authority City of Asheville
Sam Powers	City of Asheville, Community and Economic Development
Brenda Mills	City of Asheville, Community and Economic Development
Tara Irby	City of Asheville, Community and Economic Development
Jeff Staudinger	City of Asheville, Community and Economic Development
Kit Cramer	Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce
Dr. Pamela Baldwin	Asheville City Schools
Kate Pett	Asheville City Schools Foundation
Gordon Smith	Asheville City Council
Rachel Larson	WECAN Association
Kendra Penland	Green Opportunities

Sasha Vrtunski	City of Asheville, Planning and Urban Design
Amber Weaver	City of Asheville, Sustainability
Marsha Stickford	City of Asheville, Community Relations
Sarah Dale	US EPA
Anne Keller	US EPA
Kathleen Rooney	Renaissance Planning
Katharine Ange	Renaissance Planning